

**Coturnix coturnix.** The Quail.

From the fact that these birds occasionally winter in the south of England, it might be thought that some would pass the winter in Alderney; but this does not appear to be the case, and Langlois can only recall one instance of the Quail being seen there during the winter months, and this was one he shot in November many years ago. All the breeding-birds leave the island early, and mostly before the opening of the shooting-season.

---

XXIV.—*Notes on Birds in South Russia.*

By Lieut. J. N. KENNEDY, M.C., R.A., F.R.G.S., M.B.O.U.

DURING my recent service with the British Military Mission in southern Russia, I made occasional notes on birds, and I have now put them together in this paper, more in the hope that they may prove of use to future observers in these regions, than in the belief that they contain any original observations of value.

After an extended tour through central and south Russia during the autumn and early winter of 1919, I found myself at Novorossisk, a little seaport near the northern extremity of the Caucasus range. Our activities had been much limited by the retreat and disorganisation of Denikin's Army, and at Novorossisk we were awaiting for some two months the inevitable order to embark with the remains of the forces. It was during this period that I found leisure to make a small collection of bird-skins, and to compile the notes which form the first section of this article.

In the Crimea, after a short period of re-organisation of the White Army, now commanded by General Wrangel, we were involved once more, during the spring and summer of 1920, in active operations, and I was unable to make any systematic ornithological observations. I have therefore contented myself, in the second section, with a few general remarks on the Crimea, in which I include some suggestions given to me by Lieutenant V. Martino, of the Russian Army,

as to local subspecies which have not yet been described in Russia. Perchance some fellow member of the B.O.U., visiting the Crimea, may find these latter a useful indication for future research.

I would here express my indebtedness to my brother, Lieut. J. R. Kennedy, M.C., R.A., who collaborated with me at Novorossisk, and to Lieut. V. Martino, of Sebastopol, who helped me in the Crimea.

Dr. E. Hartert has been so very kind as to verify my identification of the skins, and to assign them to their proper subspecies as far as possible.

The skins I have presented to the Natural History Museum, with the exception of that of the Blue Tit shot at Novorossisk, which is now in the Tring Collection.

The eggs mentioned in the second section are now in the collection of Mr. J. G. Gordon, Corsemalzie, Whauphill.

#### I. NOVOROSSISK.

Novorossisk is a small town lying round an open bay near the northern end of the Caucasus Mountains and not far south of the Straits of Kertch. The hills rise steeply from the shore, their slopes being rocky and clothed generally with low trees and bushes. Behind the hills lies Circassia and the steppe-land, the Scythia of two thousand years ago, where the fabled one-eyed Arimaspians waged everlasting warfare with griffins which guarded treasures of gold.

The winter climate of Novorossisk is more severe than a study of the map might lead one to suppose—the thermometer often falls to 20° F. below freezing-point, and the sea freezes along the shore, although not to such a great extent as in the Sea of Azov, where we had some skating and ice-boating. The chief feature of the weather is the north-east wind, which blows with incredible velocity for a few days at a time at irregular intervals. This wind makes the port a dangerous one, and while it blows, ships lying close inshore, even inside the breakwater, are unable to communicate with the land by boat. On occasion, during the nor'easter, some of our officers had to crawl on hands and knees from

their quarters to the mess, being unable to stand upright. (I may remark that this did not happen after dinner!) One of our motor cyclists was once blown into the sea with his machine while proceeding along the shore-road.

My brother and I used to venture up the hillsides in search of birds when the nor'easter was blowing, in the hope of falling in with some of the rarer species which might be driven down from the mountains, but the birds were generally all congregated in the lower valleys and about the houses at such times, and we seldom saw anything except an occasional Woodcock or a few Goldfinches, which seemed to stand the cold better than most other birds. Whilst scrambling about the slopes on those expeditions, clad in great coats and fur caps, and grasping the trees and bushes with one hand whilst the other held a gun, we would hear every few minutes a roar, like that of an express train, heralding the approach of an especially violent gust as it came tearing down from the hill-tops, driving clouds of snow before it. We would then cling with both hands to a tree-trunk until it swept down past us, the snow first blotting out the town below and then billowing away across the waters of the bay, which would be lashed into flying spray.

The periods of these winds were usually followed by mild summer-like spells, during which the great flocks of Duck, which had been brought down to the bay by the cold, would gradually dwindle and disappear to inland waters. Towards the end of March the duck became so weak and tame during the storms that they would take shelter in the streets of the town and allow themselves to be captured by hand or knocked over with stones. Bramblings and other small birds also suffered greatly from the cold.

Most of my observations were made on the eastern side of the bay and in the bay itself, where we used to shoot Duck frequently. This sport was rendered somewhat exciting by the fact that the Russian soldiers shot at the Duck with rifles from the shore to such an extent that one might almost have imagined at times that a sharp engagement was in progress. When duck-shooting we used to keep our hands in our gloves

until the moment came to seize the gun, and thrust them back whenever the shot had been taken. Even so, our fingers would be excruciatingly painful for a few seconds after contact with the metal. We sometimes returned from these expeditions sheeted in ice formed of frozen spray.

The following notes were all made during February and March, 1920.

**Garrulus glandarius** (subsp. ?). Jay.

One example was seen in a glen near the town on 26.ii.20, and its harsh cry was subsequently heard among the trees on several occasions.

**Sturnus vulgaris sophiæ**. Starling.

♀. Novorossisk, 3.ii.20.

Four of these birds were seen during a cold spell on 3.ii.20. They were very shy, but one was secured. This is my only record.

Dr. Hartert says of this skin: "It is *Sturnus v. sophiæ* if that is a 'good' subspecies; it seems generally quite recognisable, but is sometimes difficult to distinguish."

In the field this Starling struck me as being much lighter in general colouring than *Sturnus v. vulgaris*.

**Coccothraustes coccothraustes coccothraustes**. Hawfinch.

♂. Novorossisk, 2.ii.20.

♀. Novorossisk, 2.ii.20.

A few Hawfinches were always to be seen about the valleys near the town.

**Chloris chloris chloris**. Greenfinch.

♂. Novorossisk, 3.ii.20.

♀. Novorossisk, 3.ii.20.

Fairly common, consorting often with Bramblings.

**Carduelis carduelis** (subsp. ?). Goldfinch.

♀. Novorossisk, 6.ii.20.

Flocks were frequently seen, one consisting of over forty birds. They seemed to occur at higher altitudes than most other species during the cold winds, and I have remarked

more than once that they were the only small birds to be seen on the upper slopes during a nor'easter.

Dr. Hartert is doubtful of the subspecies of my specimen, although it is a good skin, and considers a series necessary to determine this.

***Fringilla cœlebs cœlebs.*** Chaffinch.

♂. Novorossisk, 10. ii. 20.

Fairly common, several always being noted during a walk along the hillsides.

***Fringilla montifringilla.*** Brambling.

♂. Novorossisk, 2. ii. 20.

♀. Novorossisk, 7. ii. 20.

Perhaps the commonest species, large flocks constantly frequenting the vicinity of the town. During the nor'easter they would become so tame that they could be caught by hand, and large numbers died of cold. They had all disappeared by 12 March.

***Passer domesticus domesticus.*** House-Sparrow.

Common in the town.

***Emberiza cia cia.*** Meadow-Bunting.

♂. Novorossisk, 8. ii. 20.

Rather uncommon, but regularly seen.

***Melanocorypha calandra.*** Calandra Lark.

♀. Novorossisk, 12. iii. 20.

This species was not observed before 12 March. On this day, while seated at my window, I saw a flock of some forty of these birds come northwards up the bay, evidently on migration. Taking my collecting-gun, I went in search of them on the hillside, where I presently found them sheltering behind bushes, and succeeded in obtaining one specimen.

I see that Mr. P. J. C. McGregor, writing in 'The Ibis' (1917, p. 10) notes 10 March as the first date in 1910 of the occurrence of this species at Erzerum, which is 300 miles south of Novorossisk.

**Galerida cristata** (subsp.?). Crested Lark.

♂. Novorossisk, 6. ii. 20.

A few of these birds frequented the hillside and the neighbourhood of the shore.

**Alauda arvensis cinerascens.** Sky-Lark.

♂. Novorossisk, 5. ii. 20.

o Novorossisk, 1. ii. 20.

Very common.

**Anthus pratensis.** Meadow-Pipit.

o Novorossisk, 3. ii. 20.

A few were always to be seen about the hillsides and along the shore.

**Monticola saxatilis.** Rock-Thrush.

I saw this species once only, a male having been observed on 27. i. 20 during a spell of cold weather. Owing partly to its shorter tail, the Rock-Thrush strikes one as being much plumper than our Song-Thrush.

**Motacilla alba alba.** White Wagtail.

♂. Novorossisk, 6. ii. 20.

Occasionally seen near the shore in February.

**Motacilla flava** (subsp.?). Yellow Wagtail.

One example of a form of Yellow Wagtail was seen near the shore in February.

**Certhia familiaris familiaris.** Tree-Creeper.

o Novorossisk, 1. ii. 20.

One example only was met with.

**Parus major major.** Great Tit.

o Novorossisk, 3. ii. 20.

Common.

**Parus cæruleus orientalis.** Blue Tit.

o Novorossisk, 6. ii. 20.

Rather scarce.

**Turdus pilaris.** Fieldfare.

♀. Novorossisk, 7. ii. 20.

Uncommon. Three small companies were seen high on the hillsides during a fine spell of weather in early February.

**Turdus viscivorus viscivorus.** Mistle-Thrush.

Four or five pairs were observed in a valley near the town towards the end of February.

**Turdus merula** (subsp.?). Blackbird.

A few were always to be seen.

**Phoenicurus ochrurus gibraltariensis.** Black Redstart.

♂. Novorossisk, 5. ii. 20.

I have six records of this handsome species. It frequented the rocky slopes in the vicinity of houses.

**Erithacus rubecula rubecula.** Robin.

o Novorossisk, 2. ii. 20.

Rather uncommon, only one or two having been observed.

**Prunella modularis** (subsp.?). Hedge-Sparrow.

o Novorossisk, 8. ii. 20.

I have two records only of this species, both on the 8th of February.

**Troglodytes troglodytes troglodytes.** Wren.

♂. Novorossisk, 3. ii. 20.

Not at all common.

**Dryobates minor** (subsp.?). Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.

One example of a form of Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was twice seen among the trees on the hillside on 6. ii. 20 and 8. ii. 20. I should have liked to shoot this bird for determination of subspecies, but on the only occasion when I found myself within range of it there was a jammed cartridge case in my gun.

**Falco peregrinus** (subsp.?). Peregrine Falcon.

One frequented the hills near the town and was often seen.

**Falco tinnunculus tinnunculus.** Kestrel.

Only one record in February.



**Anas platyrhyncha platyrhyncha.** Wild Duck.

A few were seen, and one was shot in the bay in February.

**Anas penelope.** Wigeon.

Only once seen in February.

**Nyroca ferina ferina.** Pochard.

♂. Novorossisk, 6. ii. 20.

Fairly common in small companies in the bay, where we shot a number.

**Nyroca fuligula.** Tufted Duck.

♂. Novorossisk, 6. ii. 20.

This was by far the commonest Duck, flocks of several hundreds of birds frequenting the bay. They always increased noticeably in numbers after the cold nor'easter had been blowing. This Duck is also very numerous in winter along the south coast of the Crimea.

**Nyroca marila marila.** Scaup.

The Scaup was numerous in the bay, where it occurred in large flocks. This Duck was frequently shot.

**Netta rufina.** Red-crested Pochard.

♂. Novorossisk, 12. ii. 20.

Several of these Ducks appeared in the bay among the flocks of Tufted Duck and Pochard on 12. ii. 20, after a spell of very cold weather.

**Mergus serrator.** Red-breasted Merganser.

Occasionally seen in the bay.

**Phalacrocorax carbo** (subsp.?) Cormorant.

Several were seen in the harbour from time to time.

**Phalacrocorax graculus** (subsp.?) Shag.

A few were observed.

**Podiceps cristatus cristatus.** Great Crested Grebe.

o Novorossisk, 4. ii. 20.

These birds frequented the harbour and the bay in



companies of from four to ten birds and, more commonly, in pairs.

**Podiceps ruficollis ruficollis.** Little Grebe.

One or two Little Grebes were seen feeding close in shore during February.

**Scolopax rusticola.** Woodcock.

The Woodcock was not uncommon on the snow-covered hillsides, especially during the nor'easter, when they had probably crossed to the lee side of the mountains for shelter.

**Larus ridibundus.** Black-headed Gull.

Numerous about the shores of the bay.

**Larus argentatus cachinnans.** Herring-Gull.

Common. Eighty were counted wheeling over the harbour on 5 February.

**Tetraogallus caucasicus.** Caucasian Snow-Partridge.

My brother saw a bird on 4.ii.20 which was probably of this species. The white marking of the wings was distinctly seen. This record would seem to indicate that the Snow-Partridge occurs at rather low altitudes (300 ft.) during extremely cold and stormy weather.

## II. THE CRIMEA.

The Crimea offers a wide field of enterprise to the field naturalist, comprising as it does such a varied terrain, and having such an interesting geological history. Along the southern coast-line extends a range of mountains, for the most part wild and rocky and well-wooded, although of late years the Tartars have felled trees to such an extent that the climate is said to have been affected. On the seaward slopes there is a profusion of blossoming trees, and, during a short walking tour in April, I observed many of our garden flowers, such as peonies and narcissi, growing wild. North of these mountains lie the steppes, stretching away like the

sea for miles on every hand, and carpeted in spring with tulips and poppies of every hue. In the north, along the shores of the Putrid Sea (deriving its name from an unpleasant odour, chiefly noticeable during a breeze and due to its stagnant and enclosed nature), lie great marshes—the haunt of Duck and Waders. Here there are banks and islands which are the nesting haunts of innumerable sea-birds.

My bird-notes from the Crimea are of the scantiest, but perhaps a few remarks may be of interest. I was there from April to June, 1920.

I am not a geologist, but I will set down the following theory of geological history which was described to me by Russians there, as it will, if correct, be of interest to ornithologists. The hypothesis is that in the remote past the Crimean Mountains were a prolongation of the Caucasus range, and that they were subsequently cut off by the sea, and formed an island for some time. It was presumably during this period that island forms of life developed characteristics which have persisted to the present day, even after the uplift of the Crimean steppes which have formed a junction with the mainland to the north. It would therefore appear that the hill district in the south is the true home of subspecies peculiar to the Crimea.

Lieut. Martino indicated the following subspecific forms as not yet having been described owing to lack of complete series of specimens, and I feel sure he would have no objection to my making his suggestions more widely known:—

*Astur palumbarius* (subsp.?).

*Regulus cristatus* (subsp.?).

*Accentor modularis* (subsp.?).

*Ardea cinerea* (subsp.?).

*Loxia curvirostris* (subsp.?).

*Ruticilla mesoleuca* (subsp.?).

*Motacilla boarula* (subsp.?).

*Turdus merula* (subsp.?).

I retain his own nomenclature.

He informed me that the following subspecies have already been described and recognised by the Russians :—

*Coccothraustes coccothraustes nigricans.*

*Fringilla cælebs solomki.*

*Fringilla carduelis nikolski.*

*Chloris chloris mensfieri.*

*Picus major pinetorum.*

*Cyanistes cæruleus brauneri.*

*Acridula rosea taurica.*

*Sturnus vulgaris tauricus.*

*Certhia certhia buturlini.*

*Troglodytes parvulus hyrcanus.*

Of the foregoing I obtained skins of the Chaffinch (♂ Mackenzie Heights, 20. vi. 20, and ♀ Mackenzie Heights, 20. vi. 20), Greenfinch (♂ Mackenzie Heights, 21. vi. 20), and Blue Tit (? Mackenzie Heights, 20. vi. 20). The first two Dr. Hartert assigns, without comment, to *Fringilla c. cælebs* and *Chloris c. chloris* respectively, whilst he finds the last skin to be too bad for identification of the subspecies.

Specimens of the Tree-Pipit (*Anthus t. trivialis*) and of the Red-backed Shrike (*Lanius c. collurio*)\* were also obtained in June from the Mackenzie Heights and Inkerman.

The Bee-eater (*Merops apiaster*) is not uncommon, and was frequently seen perching on telegraph-wires. These birds do not appear to form colonies here as they are said to do in Spain. The Rook (*Corvus f. frugilegus*) is very common everywhere, and small rookeries are seen all over the Crimea.

On the steppes there are vast numbers of Larks. The Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) was often met with, and companies of three or four birds were more than once seen circling in ponderous flight over the plain. The Hoopoe (*Upupa e. epops*) is a very common species in the Crimea, a few pairs frequenting the vicinity of every village. One

\* Dr. Hartert says of my specimen of the Red-backed Shrike: "There is a supposed Caucasian race, but its characters and distribution are doubtful; it is supposed to have less rufous on the back and smaller bill, but both characters are quite doubtful and variable. This specimen agrees with some others not from the Caucasus."

nest containing nine eggs in various stages of incubation was found on 15 May in the roof of a peasant's hut, nearly all the tiles having been removed in the process of search, much to the disgust of the owner, who was only pacified by an assurance that his name would be entered on the data label.

In the marshes and on the sandbanks of the north great numbers of Terns and Gulls breed; eggs of the Slender-billed Gull (*Larus gelastes*) were obtained at Arabat. The Great Black-headed Gull (*Larus ichthyaëtus*) was frequently seen flying over the Putrid Sea. Other birds noted in the marshes were the Avocet, Lapwing, Garganey, and a species of Harrier which was nesting near Djankoi.

I was given some Eagle's eggs taken on 20.iv.20 by Lieut. Martino, who had assigned them to "the form of Imperial Eagle without a white marking on the shoulder." It appears possible that they are eggs of the Steppe Eagle. The nest was in a tree some 30 feet from the ground in a valley of the Mackenzie Heights, and the birds had built in the same locality for several years. The chief food of the Eagle was described as consisting of "sushliks," the common rodents of the steppes.

Eggs were also obtained of the following:—Greenfinch, Chaffinch, Red-backed Shrike, Calandra Lark, White-winged Lark, Jay, Hooded Crow, Starling, Blackbird, Song-Thrush, Magpie, Mistle-Thrush, Blue Tit, Longtailed Tit.

In conclusion, I may perhaps be permitted to set down a note from my diary which throws a gleam of light on ancient days. Falconry appears to be a lost art in the Crimea, but it was once a favourite pastime of the Tartar Khan, whose palace is still to be seen in good repair at Bahkchi-Serai. The following story was related to me by the Circassian Sergeant—a fine tall fellow, distinguished by his long and fierce moustache and bright scarlet breeches—who was chief of the body-guard of a Russian General to whose staff I was attached for some time. One of his ancestors was the Khan's Chief Falconer. In the royal mews was a pair of rare and valued Falcons of exceeding courage and swiftness of flight, which the Khan had procured at great trouble and expense from an eastern land. It came to pass that, one morning,

the Chief Falconer, on his rounds, discovered in the cage of these Falcons an egg remarkable for the beauty of its colouring. This egg he furtively concealed in the folds of his dress and carried off to his quarters. Subsequently he presented it, for hatching, to a neighbouring prince, who vied with the Khan in his love of Falcons, and in exchange, he received a damsel of surpassing loveliness whom he had long desired to add to the number of his wives. Unfortunately for him, the Khan discovered the misdemeanour of his Falconer, who fell into disfavour and had to flee for his life across the sea to Circassia, where, perchance, some wandering ornithologist may again hear this story from the lips of one of his numerous descendants.

XXV.—*On the correct name of D'Aubenton's "Manucode à Bouquets."* By Lord ROTHSCHILD.

WHEN looking up Birds-of-Paradise in connection with the "Plumage Bill," Mr. T. Iredale drew my attention to the statement by Mr. Ogilvie-Grant on page 24 of the Jubilee Supplement of this journal, with regard to the synonymy of a species of *Diphyllodes*, that Dr. Hartert and I had agreed that his synonymy of this bird was correct. I wish here to put this synonymy right, and at the same time say I had not agreed to Mr. Grant's view.

Mr. Grant adopts Boddaert's name, changing his *speccosa* into *speciosa*, as being the author's intention. This he does because the name *speccosa* dates from 1781, whereas he asserted Pennant's name of *magnifica* in Forster's Indian Zoology dated only from 1795.

This is erroneous, as Pennant's name dates from the first German edition, viz. "Indische Zoologie, &c." herausgegeben von Johann Reinhold Forster, Halle 1781, not from the 2nd and 3rd English editions of 1790 and 1795. Therefore the correct name of D'Aubenton's bird (Pl. Enl. pl. 631) is *Diphyllodes magnifica* (Penn.) and not *D. speccosa* (Bodd.). Moreover, according to the International Rules *speciosa* is inadmissible, as only author's corrections in the current volume are valid.